

The Birth Control Debate: 1930s-1940s

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Throughout the 1930s and 1940s birth control became a part of a larger social problem that spanned across political and religious lines. Due to economic issues caused by the Great Depression, bringing children into the world was no longer a feasible dream for many families that already struggled with providing for themselves and any children they already had. The Comstock Laws prevented women from seeking out contraceptive methods to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Men, however, were encouraged during World War II to use contraceptives to prevent pregnancies. While white women were not being given choices on their own reproductive rights, women of color in the South were being forced into sterilization programs. These programs highlight the authority men had over women's agency at the time. The role of the church at the time is also explored as the Protestant and the Catholic church had drastically different views on the use of birth control. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2021 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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